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HAL RECEIVES FIRST PVT SECTOR-MADE REAR FUSELAGE FOR LCA MK1A

The rear fuselage for Light Combat Aircraft Mk1A, produced by private firm Alpha Tocol Engineering, was handed over to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited in the presence of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh in Bengaluru on Sunday

Singh termed the handing over as a milestone in India's defence manufacturing

Already manufactured 12 LCA MK1A rear fuselages, which are on the aircraft in the manufacturing line

With this supply, a major structure module produced by an Indian private partner will be integrated into the LCA Mk1A aircraft, enabling HAL to meet additional delivery commitments for IAF from 2025-26 onwards | P7

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FROM DUBAI WITH LOVE

Rohit and Co beat Black Caps to win their first 50-over ICC trophy in 12 years

SWAROOP SWAMINATHAN @ Chennai

The Indian team celebrates after winning the ICC Champions Trophy in Dubai on Sunday | AFP

THIS generational team finally has global gold to rubber-stamp their status as the greatest ODI side this country has known. Rohit Sharma, three-and-a-half-years after he was entrusted with the task of bringing about a cultural reset, has now two ICC titles, the only Indian captain apart from M S Dhoni, who won three, to do so.

It's significant because for all the cricketing commerce they had commanded, the trophy cabinet hadn't kept pace. From 1984, about the time when the the country began to learn the spelling of the sport, till the beginning of 2024, this team had three ICC crowns (excluding the one shared with Sri Lanka). You can count all those near misses but finishing second best is no good when you are — or want to be — the apex predator (the walls of the Louvre are adorned with some of the greatest artists but there's a halo around Da Vinci).

India have gone big since last June. Tournaments across formats in three continents have now resulted in two of the biggest prizes this sport has to offer. It's important to state here they had an advantage over each of the other seven teams in the tournament. Even if coach Gautam Gambhir labelled them as 'cribbers', India are the only team who were afforded the luxury of picking a squad for one venue (pacer Mohammed Shami himself called it an 'advantage'). But they have maximised the conditions on offer.

After the spinners restricted the Black Caps to 251 on one of the better Dubai surfaces, their batters, predictably found gaps in the Matt Henry-shaped hole that was the Kiwi bowling. What was so striking about India's march to the final, and the win under the stadium's imposing Ring of Fire, was the absurd lack of jeopardy. The last two finals have become balms to address the permenant heartache of 2023. Some dopamine to address a battered mind, body and soul. P13

MAESTRO'S PRIDE OF PLACE

Legendary music director Ilaiyaraaja's 'Valiant', the first ever Western classical symphony by an Indian composer, debuted at London's Eventim Apollo Theatre on Sunday. The maestro was joined by Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra. The music was conducted by Mikel Toms | X | P9

Koppal horror: Third accused picked up in TN

AMIT S UPADHYE @ Koppal

THE third accused in the rape and murder of tourists at Sanapur, near Hampi, was secured from Tamil Nadu. The Koppal police traced the accused, Sai Ram (23), to Tamil Nadu and picked him up with the help of TN police. A Koppal police team is bringing him back to the district.

On Thursday night, the three accused raped two women, including an Israeli tourist, and pushed three other male tourists into the flowing Tungabhadra canal. While Bibash, a 22-year-old tourist from Odisha, drowned, the other two tourists swam back to safety.

The Koppal police had formed six teams to trace the accused and swiftly apprehended two, Mallesh and Chetan Sai, while the third had gone missing after the arrest of two others.

Police sources said the state government is keenly monitoring the case and Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara will meet senior officials from Koppal and Vijayanagara districts in Bengaluru this week.

Koppal district in-charge minister Shivaraj Tangadagi said, "People should not go to some places at night. Areas like Sanapur have leopards and sloth bears which are dangerous to people. I have have told officials to fix CCTV cameras in areas that have legal resorts and are frequented by tourists. We have instructed officials to check places where local people rent out houses to tourists."

SECURITY TO BE TIGHTENED: P7

Oppn sharpens knives as Parl session begins today

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

WITH the Opposition set to corner the Centre on the alleged manipulation of electoral rolls, Waqf Bill, delimitation and the Trump administration's tariff claims, the Parliament session starting Monday is likely to be rocky.

The session may also see a showdown over the Waqf Amendment Bill, which the government is looking to pass in this session. Last week, the Union cabinet approved 14 amendments proposed by a joint parliamentary committee. Congress leader Jairam Ramesh said INDIA bloc leaders will hold consultation with other parties to oppose the Waqf bill.

Another issue that may rock the session is the duplicate Electoral Photo Identity Card numbers. The TMC has taken the lead in flagging the issue, following which the Election Commission said it would take corrective measures within three months.

The Opposition will also raise the issue of fresh violence in Manipur, as Home Minister Amit Shah is expected to move a statutory resolution seeking Parliament approval for President's Rule in Manipur.

Jairam Ramesh said Congress will raise the threat of reciprocal tariffs by US President Donald Trump and called for a bipartisan collective resolve to deal with the threats.

The second leg of the Budget session will end on April 4.

EXPRESS READ

Teen boy, girl found hanging from tree in Kalaburagi dist

Kalaburagi: A boy and girl, studying in Class 10 at a government high school at Yadrami taluk of Kalaburagi district, hanged themselves on Saturday morning. The bodies of the boy from a BC community and the girl from a minority community were found hanging from a tree from a single rope | P5

5 die as car rams stationary truck near Chitradurga

Chitradurga: Five people from Bengaluru died on the spot when their car rammed a stationary truck on the Pune-Bengaluru National Highway 48 on the outskirts of Chitradurga city on Sunday. The deceased were returning to Bengaluru from Belagavi. Another person sustained grievous injuries | P5

After 16 days, body retrieved from Srisailam tunnel

Hyderabad: After 16 days of operations at Srisailam Left Bank Canal (SLB) tunnel, rescue teams retrieved a dead body on Sunday. The officials identified the deceased as Gurpreet Singh (40), an erector operator. He was from Punjab. The operator's body was washed away down stream due to the water flow | P7

Coming soon: Kanniyakumari to Kashmir train

B ANBUSELVAN @ Chennai

RAIL passengers, tourists and pilgrims from Tamil Nadu will soon be able to make an affordable and seamless train journey to the picturesque valleys of Kashmir.

The Southern Railway is planning to introduce the Amrit Bharat Express that will connect either Kanniyakumari, the southernmost town of India, or Rameswaram, the tip of the Indian peninsula, to Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir. The new train service would run for a length of over 4,000 kilometres.

The Amrit Bharat rake has a high-speed push-pull configuration, equipped with engines at both ends, capable of reaching speeds of up to 130 kmph. It has been designed to offer Vande Bharat-like comfort for non-AC passengers.

This initiative comes as the 111-km Katra-Banihal section, the last leg of the 272-km Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, is set to be inaugurated next month.

At present, the only way for visitors from the state to reach Kashmir is either by road or by air.

Describing the proposal as an ambitious project of the Southern Railway, official sources revealed to *TNIE* that, "At the policy level, the decision has been taken to provide a train link to Srinagar/Baramulla either from Kanniyakumari or Rameswaram. A Vande Bharat trial run from New Delhi to Srinagar was conducted recently and the line is likely to be thrown open for operation soon. The decision on introducing the AB Express from Kanniyakumari/Rameswaram to Srinagar will be finalised once the line is inaugurated."

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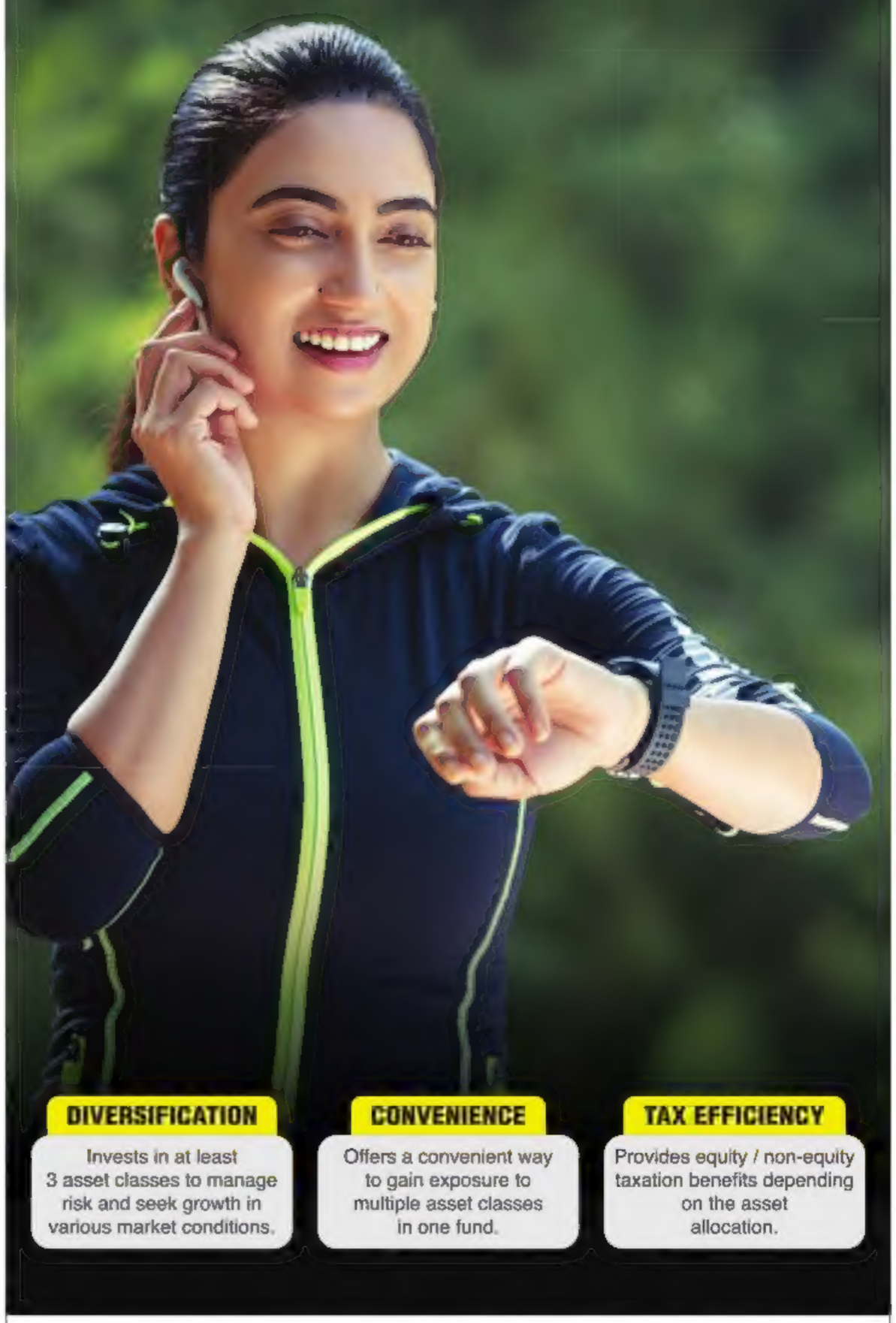

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